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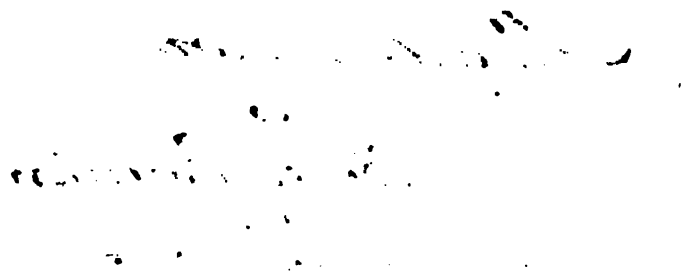


Mrs Brown

To

Betsy Parinton

4th 1826







O

OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE IMPORTANCE

OF

FEMALE EDUCATION.

AND

Maternal Instruction,

WITH THEIR

Beneficial Influence

ON

SOCIETY.

BY A MOTHER.

W. J. H.

"Every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands."
Proverbs iv. 10.

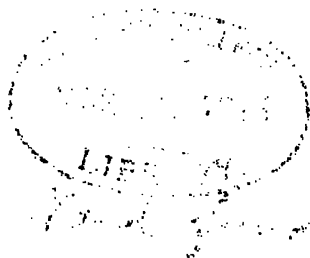
"From education, as the leading cause,
"The public character its colour draws;
"Thence the prevailing manners take their cast,
"Extravagant or sober, loose or chaste."—*Cowper.*



NEW-YORK:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY MAHLON DAY,
NO. 372, PEARL-STREET.

1825.



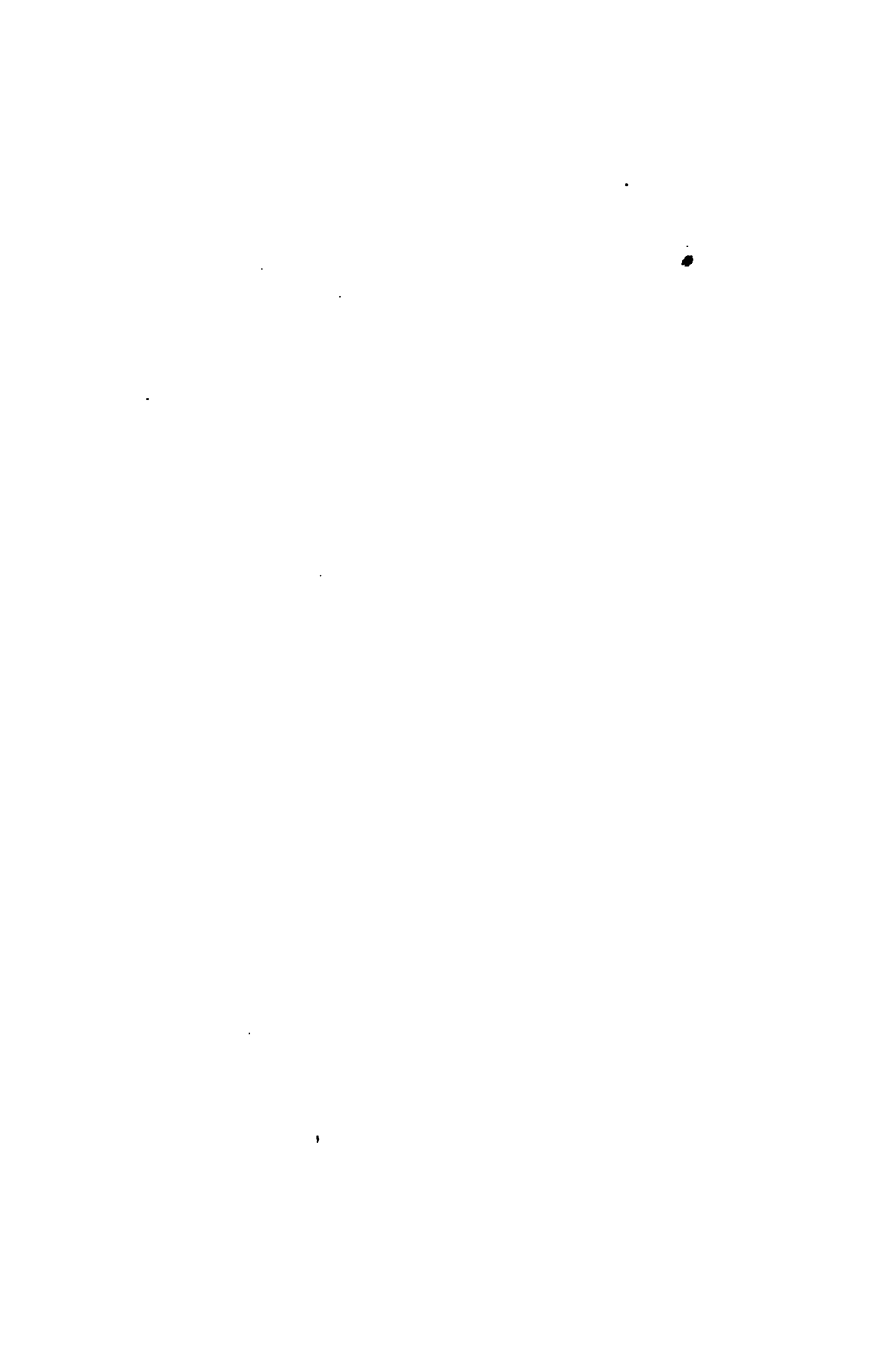
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MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.



GENERAL REMARKS.

IF we carefully examine the pages of ancient and modern history, we shall find, that where darkness and superstition have most prevailed, the female character has been most neglected and debased; and that where mankind have become enlightened by the influence of the Gospel, and have been sensible of the advantages resulting from early and virtuous impressions, they have seen the propriety of cultivating the female mind. And have we not reason to believe, that there is no part of the habitable globe, where females have a better opportunity, or where, if they were but attentive to their own best interest, there would be greater encouragement given for their improvement, than among the enlightened and reflecting sons of America? Why, then should we neglect so great a blessing, and suffer our

minds to be engrossed with trifles and vanity, which end in disappointment ; or to fall into that apathy which induces us to suppose, that what women can do is of little avail. Have we not all talents, for the improvement of which we must be accountable? Have we not all duties to perform, for the neglect of which no excuse will be accepted? How often do we find the historian, the biographer, and even the ready writer in our periodical publications, when relating the lives of men eminent for their talents, piety or usefulness, recurring to early impressions, and to pious maternal care.

It is therefore, very necessary in our first setting out, seriously to reflect, and to ascertain what is the object we wish to obtain, by the cultivation of our own minds, and the education of our children. If it is, as it most certainly ought to be, that we may increase our own usefulness, and prepare our children for the enjoyment of those rational blessings pertaining to this life, and for the reception of that principle of light and grace, which, as it is attended to, will qualify them for permanent and everlasting happiness in the life

to come, let us not neglect any opportunity that will promote the object of our wishes. Delays are always attended with danger, and often with irretrievable mischief.

It cannot be supposed, that other persons will feel the same affectionate interest in children as their parents ought to do, particularly the mother, who has them under her immediate care. Those passions which are so manifest in early life, and require so much attention to counteract or bring into proper subjection, leave no time for a mother's indolence, or delay to a future period. And the time present only being at her disposal, it is of the utmost importance that it be employed to the best advantage: that if her days should be few, she may leave as good and lasting impressions as possible on the tender minds of her children; or, if her days should be many, that she may with them enjoy the precious fruits of her labour. The husbandman scattereth the seed, and hath long patience for its increase.

The improvement and happiness of the human family, so materially depend on the right formation of the infant mind, that it

certainly is of great importance that those to whom children are intrusted, should be prepared by the cultivation of their own hearts, to discharge that trust with fidelity.

Experience and a knowledge of mankind fully prove, that what parents wish their children to understand and practice, they are most careful to instil into their minds in early life, because the most lasting impressions are then made. And is it not by suffering improper ideas to be infused, that superstition and bigotry, together with a numerous train of evil dispositions, take possession of the heart, from which it is very difficult to eradicate them, even when the judgment is convinced of their impropriety?

To make proper impressions on the minds of children, to guard and strengthen them as they advance in life, and to show them by example and precept, the comfort and enjoyment derived from virtuous and circumspect conduct, careful attention must be given to that precept of Christ, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." Watchfulness, and obedience to what is manifested in the heart by the light of truth, are the alone

source of preservation to parents, and the qualification for the performance of all their relative duties.

The rising youth have greatly the advantage of those who are now in the meridian of life. On the subject of female education, and virtuous accomplishments particularly, much has been said, calculated to assist in forming the mind for usefulness ; in qualifying it for domestic enjoyments ; enlarging and ennobling the heart with virtuous sensibility, and thereby preparing the young to become interesting and agreeable companions, and to act their part with dignity and propriety in that sphere wherein they may be placed. To be fully sensible of, and carefully to improve this blessing, would be of incalculable benefit to them, and to posterity.

It was the design of an All-wise and benevolent Creator in the formation of woman, that she should be a help-meet and companion to man. If, in a state of innocence, her company and assistance were necessary to his comfort and happiness, how much more so, when his cares, his toils, and his anxieties, are multiplied. This sentiment is

finely illustrated by one of the ancients, when speaking of the excellent qualities that adorn a virtuous woman. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he hath no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness."

Although there are many very useful persons of interesting character, who prefer a single life, yet I think the celebrated Montesquieu, when speaking of the influence of females on public manners, &c. must have considered them in the capacity of wives and of mothers. He says, "The safety of the State depends on the virtue of the women." He also observes, that "Greece owed much of its wise policy to their chastity and economical virtues." But we need

not go to Greece or Rome for examples to prove the effects of female influence.

It is said, that soon after the conquest of England, and while it was divided into many small kingdoms, and when Ethelbert, king of Kent, was soliciting the hand of Bertha, a princess of Paris, "one of the stipulations insisted on, ~~was,~~ that she should have the free enjoyment of ~~her~~ religion, which was that of Christianity." "When she was introduced to the Court of her husband, the steadfastness of her principles, the sweetness and suavity of her disposition, and the conciliatory influence of her deportment, were so attractive, that not only the king, but his courtiers were brought to the acknowledgment of christianity, and through them it was spread over the whole English nation."

If we carefully examine the sacred writings, the history of some of the kings of Israel and Judah, will furnish abundant proof of the effects of female influence. It is stated as one of Ahab's first and great transgressions, that "he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and became a worshipper of Baal : and that there

was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." When his son came to the throne, "he did evil (also) in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and made Israel to sin." It is likewise said of Jehoram, king of Judah, "he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife;" and of Ahaziah, because his mother who was the daughter of Omri, and sister of Ahab, "was his counsellor to do wickedly."

Another essential circumstance is observable in this history. When those kings governed, who endeavoured to serve the Lord, and to teach the people to do so, (though they were not exempt from human frailties) they generally prospered in their undertakings, enjoyed the good things of the land, and their enemies were not suffered to tyrannise over them. But during the reign of those kings who worshipped other gods; thereby setting their subjects a bad example, there were wars and famine almost continually.

And from the great suffering of man and beast, the Prophets might well say— “ When the wicked bear rule, the land mourneth.”

In this view of the subject, we may clearly discover the propriety, and more fully estimate the advantages, arising from a proper cultivation of the female mind. It is often asserted, and with great propriety, that on a proper education, the safety and happiness of a nation very materially depend. If so, is not the foundation of that education to be laid in the virtuous culture of females ; that they may be prepared to watch carefully the opening buds of infantile intellect, and to distinguish between those propensities which should be fostered with care, those that want regulating, and those which ought to be entirely eradicated ? Is it not on the lap, or by the side of a pious and judicious mother, that the foundation of what is good and great is generally laid ?

For a woman to be a true help-meet to her husband, and a faithful mother to her children, she must be virtuous, industrious, and economical : studiously careful to live within the limits of their income, and by

her neatness and cheerful deportment, always to make their home agreeable. And nothing but want of health should prevent her, (in whatever station she is placed,) from a general oversight of her domestic concerns. Every mother who is under the necessity of committing her offspring to the care of a nurse, should have a watchful care over that nurse, and spend as much of her time with her children as she can. What employment can a mother be engaged in, that affords equal pleasure, and is of equal importance with the proper instruction of her children and family ?

By indulging a desire to appear more wealthy, and to make a greater show, than their circumstances would admit, many have improperly extended their business, and in the end, lost what they had, and been reduced to poverty. . How much more desirable to a virtuous and feeling mind is a cottage, (even a solitary one) with a competency, through the means of industry and frugality, than the show of that wealth and grandeur, which must end in sorrow and disappointment. But this is not all. There

are circumstances attending, that are of much greater importance than loss of property. A man who in his business, is straining every nerve to accomplish this desire of obtaining wealth, to gratify the wishes, and to indulge the solicitations of his wife and children, cannot have that leisure for the proper improvement of his own mind, and for the cultivation of his own talents, that he ought to have, and which his station as an accountable being, placed at the head of a family, certainly requires.

Were children taught by the example of their parents properly to estimate the advantages of wealth; and were the virtues of frugality, temperance, and economy, brought into proper estimation, and were that estimation, which is now bestowed on grandeur, made the reward of merit, have we not reason to believe that it would not only produce domestic, but national prosperity? "built, not on the quicksands of extended commerce; not on the bloodstained treasures of the east or west; but on the solid rock of public and of private virtue."

Let every mother, then, who has a suffi-

cient degree of christian philanthropy, and parental tenderness, to feel a glow of heart in the contemplation of such a picture, consider herself as an instrument in the hand of a kind Providence to promote its realization. Let her reflect how much the proper education of one single family may eventually contribute towards it. And that while the fruits of her labour are a rich compensation of peace, virtue and contentment, which may descend through generations yet unborn, she will herself enjoy a suitable and permanent reward. But should she see her beloved children, in the bloom of youth, languishing under the pressure of disease, and about to enter into a state of fixedness, how sweet would be the consolation, that she had endeavoured, according to the best of her understanding, to prepare them for such a state ! And that He who had blessed her pious care, would take the precious treasure He had loaned, into the mansions of eternal bliss.

Happy would it be for mankind if this care were more generally extended : we should not then see so many of our young people trifling away in idleness, vanity, and dissi-

pation, that time which is lent them for great and important purposes. There would not be so much anxiety and expense in decorating those poor bodies of clay, which are seen to-day, and to-morrow are consigned to the silent tomb, there to mingle with their parent earth. We should then see more of our sons pursuing those objects which tend to ennoble the mind, and to promote the welfare and happiness of the human race, and our daughters uniting with them in the practice of those virtues which are best calculated to answer the end of our existence : glorifying God while here, and thereby becoming prepared to enjoy and adore him in the life to come.

What must be the feelings of that mother, who has unhappily been the instrument of sowing and cultivating in the bosoms of her children, the seeds of pride and ostentation, even in the nursery ! for to the nursery may be traced many of the evils which abound. For instance : how common it is, when children are dressed in something new or clean, instead of informing them that it is to make them sweet and comfortable, they are

sent to the other side of the room that we may see how pretty they look ! and for performing this with an air of ostentation, they are rewarded with a kiss ! Can this be the object of a fond mother's ambition for the darling children of her bosom ? Is it to this, she would devote the offspring, a benevolent Creator has committed to her care ?

Many are the females, who might have shone with brightness, been ornaments to their sex, and useful members of the community, but for the influence of those destructive mental associations which have been early and deeply rooted, and which are seldom, if ever, entirely subdued. But where these unhappy associations have already taken place, it is our duty, as well as our interest, properly to ascertain how they may be most effectually counteracted. It cannot be done by grave lessons, and serious arguments alone, or by formal declamations against the vanity of dress. One remedy, and one only remains, in which there can be any probability of success. The mother who would have her children superior to pride and vanity, must be superior to them herself. Every lesson

to be taught with effect, must be enforced by example.

The following testimony to the watchful and affectionate care of a mother, is given after her decease, by her son, a late and well known writer :—" A few hours after my birth, she lost the use of one arm, and almost of her left side. Being also afflicted with the stone, she lived in a state of continual pain. Yet under all these afflictions, she was cheerful, and had the full use of her excellent understanding. She told me that when young, she frequently excused herself from going to public places, and private parties, that she might obtain an opportunity for reading. And the best authors were her favourites. The fruits of this early application, amply repaid her for the pains which she had taken to cultivate her mind. Besides fortitude under real sufferings, exemplary piety, and an excellent understanding, she was possessed of a remarkably generous disposition. Her own wishes and opinions, were never pursued merely because they were her own ; the ease and comfort of every one about her, were necessary for her well being.

In her own family, domestic order, decent economy, and plenty, were combined ; and to the education of her children, her mind was particularly bent from every ordinary occupation. She inspired me with the love of truth, and admiration of what was generous, and a dislike to low company. She took various means early to give me honourable feelings, and good principles ; and to the influence of her authority and instructions, I owe the happiness of my life."

He also relates a circumstance which occurred when he was very young, and in which his mother's prudence and care were strikingly exemplified. When he had, by giving way to a violent fit of anger, thrown an iron which endangered the life of his elder brother, he was brought into the presence of his mother. Though she was struck with horror at his conduct, she said nothing to him in anger. He thus relates the interview. "She ordered every body out of the room except myself, and then drawing me near to her, she spoke to me in a mild voice, but in a most serious manner. First, she explained to me the nature of the crime which

I had run the hazard of committing. She told me she was sure I had no intention seriously to hurt my brother, and did not know, that if the iron had hit him, it must have killed him. While I felt this first shock, and while the horror of murder was upon me, my mother seized the moment to conjure me in future to command my passions. 'You,' said she to me, 'have naturally a violent temper; if you grow up to a man without learning to govern it, it will be impossible for you to command yourself; and there is no knowing what a crime you may, in a fit of passion, commit, and how miserable you may in consequence of it become. You are but a very young child, yet I think you understand me. Instead of speaking to you as I do this moment, I might punish you severely; but I think it better to treat you like a reasonable creature. My wish is, to teach you to command your temper; no body can do that for you so well as you can do it for yourself.' The impression made by the earnest solemnity with which she spoke, never has been effaced from my mind; and I am conscious that my mother's warning frequently recur-

red to me when I felt the passion of anger arising within me, and that these words of early advice had a most powerful and salutary influence in restraining my temper.”

Here we have a striking instance, worthy the imitation of every female, of the advantages arising from early self-cultivation, and proper maternal instruction. It not only prepared the mother to sustain with cheerfulness, fortitude, and resignation the privations many years, attendant on close confinement, accompanied with great bodily pain and infirmity, but qualified her for governing her family with dignity, and educating her children with success. If we pause for a moment, we are almost involuntarily led to contemplate the excellency of true

PARENTAL AND FILIAL LOVE.

THE language addressed to the mother of Moses, when her darling infant was committed to her care by the Egyptian princess, is very appropriate to the subject. “Take him away and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages.” What mother of common understanding and sensibility, does not

feel the assurance that if she nurses her offspring with maternal care, under the guidance of that principle of love, which is to be her light, and her leader, she will receive her wages from Him, who has committed them to her care : and that she will be laying a good foundation in their minds, for the enjoyment of every rational blessing.

How long Moses remained under the paternal roof, we are not told. But we may reasonably suppose that the mother, (the father being oppressed with rigorous servitude,) spared no pains to impress on the mind of her little son, the promises of future and innumerable blessings that were to be conferred on the Israelites. For although he was instructed in all the knowledge and accomplishments of the Egyptian Court, as being the adopted son of the Princess, his mind did not become so contaminated by its allurements as to indispose him to acknowledge his brethren. And although they were then in a very degraded situation, he preferred associating with them, that he might partake of the blessings in store for the nation to which he belonged.

It remains to be a fixed principle, that if we desire to have companions in our children when they arrive to years of maturity, we must prepare their minds by furnishing them with proper ideas, and inculcating proper sentiments. Mutual love, and mutual interest, form a much stronger, and more durable tie between parents and children, than any other that can be devised. Coercion may, in childhood, produce prompt obedience, but if it destroys affection, what hope can we reasonably entertain, that when such children get from under parental authority, they will retain a respect for what they have been compelled to adopt, without a conviction of its propriety, or necessity? If the rod is ever used, it ought only to be done after there has been sufficient time to reflect upon the nature of the fault, and to ascertain that correction would be for the child's real benefit. But there should be no anger manifested in the presence of the child, and certainly there should be none felt at the time of correcting it. Special care must therefore be taken, to correct and govern our own passions, as children observe their effects much sooner than we are aware.

As love is the foundation of all our happiness, so it ought to be the predominant motive of all our actions. We must convince children that our requisitions to do, or to leave undone, are the effects of love, and that obedience to our commands will contribute to their own comfort and enjoyment. For similar reasons, it is of the utmost importance, that children be early, and properly informed, respecting the attributes of the Supreme Being. He must not be represented to them as a partial, tyrannical Sovereign; but as a kind, merciful, and affectionate parent, providing for all our necessities, and acting for the benefit and everlasting happiness of his children; and that his love and his care are universal, as is shown by the general tenor of the Holy Scriptures. Numerous passages might be selected thence, for the support of this doctrine. When Cain was wroth and his countenance was changed, because his brother's offering was more acceptable than his own; was it not said to him, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." The royal

Psalmist, when speaking of the goodness of the Lord, of which he appears to have been very sensible, says, "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." At another time; "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not his benefits." In the Revelations, it is recorded by John in the name of the Most High, "I will give to him that is athirst, of the fountain of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

The advantages arising from early mental associations of this kind, are incalculable. An instance of their happy effect, is very feelingly set forth by Elizabeth Hamilton, in her letters on education, in the following narrative. "One young man, it has been my happiness to know, who entered upon life at the age of sixteen, without any guide but his own principles, without monitor, but the precepts of education, and the dictates of his own heart. Unsullied by the temptations of a capital, he was plunged into the temptations of a camp. Fond of society, where his cheerful temper and easy

manners formed him to shine ; but still fond of improvement, neither the inducements of camp, or city, interrupted his unwearied pursuits of literature and science. Surrounded by companions, who had caught the contagion of skepticism, he, at this early period of life, listened to their arguments, weighed, examined, detected their futility, and rejected them ! In prosperity and adversity, in public and in private life, the sentiments of religion, retained their influence on his heart. Through life they were his guide ; and in death his consolation. When sinking, by painful steps, into an early grave, “ With what gratitude,” he exclaimed, “ With what delightful gratitude do I look back to my infancy, and to the judicious conduct of my mother, who made religion appear to me in colours so engaging, and so congenial ! Had I been taught as other boys are taught, my passions would have made me an easy prey to vice ; my love for enquiry, would have led me to infidelity. She prepared me for the trial of faith and virtue, and, thanks to God, I have come off victorious. Had religion been made to me a

gloomy task in infancy, where would now have been my consolation !”

If the principle of love were more generally fixed in the human mind, and children were induced to obey, because they love, what a good foundation would be laid for the operation of that Holy Spirit, which is love itself. And how many more of the votaries of religion should we then see holding forth to the world this animating language—‘The ways of virtue are ways of pleasure, and in pursuing her paths there is great delight. Thus would be fulfilled the command of Him, who said, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid (or hinder) them not.”’

EXAMPLE OF QUEEN ESTHER.

During the sprightliness of youth, the benevolent affections are quick and active, and susceptible of the readiest cultivation. A child that is taught to obey from the principle of affection, will not hesitate to forego its own inclination to serve another whose comfort depends on its exertions. And the longer the mind has enjoyed the sweet tran-

quillity, and heart-solacing satisfaction of benevolence, the more unwilling will it be to indulge those contrary dispositions, which are so destructive of its happiness. And the more frequently it rejoices in the consciousness of having contributed to the comfort and relief of others, the more it will be disposed to a repetition of acts of benevolence.

The beautiful and interesting character given by the Sacred historian, in the narrative of Esther the Queen, is a confirmation of these sentiments. It also shows the propriety, and peculiar advantages, arising from a proper cultivation of these amiable dispositions in the female mind.

At the decease of her parents, Esther was committed to the care of a kinsman named Mordecai, who brought her up as his own daughter, and as the sequel fully demonstrates, taught her obedience, from the principle of filial affection. We find that when she was raised to the dignity of queen, she did the pleasure of Mordecai, and kept his commands, as when she was under his authority. She manifested as much affection for him when he sat at the king's gate, as when he

had been in a different situation. And this proved a circumstance of great importance. For when Mordecai made known to her the situation of the Jews, telling her that Haman, the principal Minister of State, had, by false representations, obtained leave of the king, to destroy all their nation throughout his dominions; and stating to her the necessity there was for her to petition the king on their behalf, she was still attentive to his commands, though at the risk of her life. Thus, by a combination of circumstances through her interposition, the Jews were preserved from the slaughter and destruction, contemplated by Haman, who fell a sacrifice to his own cruelty and folly; while the humble Mordecai was promoted to dignity and honour.

The modest prudence and magnanimity of Esther, are not less to be admired, than her obedience and filial affection. When admitted into the presence of the king, she did not in an abrupt and hasty manner, proffer her request. But asking the company of the king and Haman at the banquet she had prepared, and receiving from the king

repeated assurances that her request, whatever it might be, should be granted, she availed herself of the opportunity, while they were at her entertainment, and accused Haman of his wicked designs, in the presence of the monarch.

In the character of Zeresh, Haman's wife, we have a striking contrast to that of Queen Esther. Haman, not suspecting the design of the queen, in inviting him, and him only, with the king to her banquet, was very much elated by this marked distinction. But when he went out from the presence of the king, he observed Mordecai the Jew, sitting at the king's gate, (it is probable very pensively ; for he was waiting to learn what effect the queen's petition had on the king,) but when he observed that Mordecai "stood not up, nor moved for him," his wrath was kindled against him, and he went home in haste. And having called together his friends, he rehearsed before them and his wife, what had been done ; and how he had been honoured by his royal patrons : saying, "moreover Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king into the ban-

quet that she had prepared, but myself: and to-morrow am I invited unto her also, with the king." Then after expatiating on his riches and his honours, he concludes with this bitter reflection, which shows at once how trifling a circumstance is capable of destroying that enjoyment which is built on pride and ambition. "All this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

When he ceased speaking, his wife, who appears to have cherished the same dispositions with her husband, united with his companions in advising him to have a gallows made, and to ask permission of the king to have Mordecai hanged thereon. And such was their haste, that they caused it to be built that very night. Mark now the consequences of all this pride and envy! On the same gallows that was prepared to hang the pious Mordecai, and on the same day, was Haman hanged, and his house given to Esther the queen, who set Mordecai over it. Thus was Zeresh deprived of her husband, and of her substance; and perhaps neglected in her adversity, and soon forgotten. In this,

as in numerous other instances we find that emphatic declaration verified ; “ Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

THE EFFECTS OF EARLY IMPRESSIONS FURTHER ILLUSTRATED.

Very important indeed is the proper management of children ; since, upon it, in great measure, depends the virtue or vice, the happiness or misery of the world. Yet how often do we see their education almost totally neglected. From the earliest dawn of reason, children should be taught to detest vice, and to respect and esteem virtue wherever it is found. Solomon says, “ Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” By training, he doubtless meant keeping a watchful care over their froward propensities, and cultivating love, charity, benevolence, and all the amiable qualities of the heart. He knew that industry, temperance, frugality, and economy, would by practice become fixed habits, and that the comfort and enjoyment derived therefrom, would be

a strong inducement to pursue the same course even in the decline of life.

It may be asked why, seeing this was Solomon's opinion, did he not pay more attention to his own son, who was to succeed him on the throne? The reason is evident, and ought to be carefully recorded. His mind was too much engrossed with other things; for, in the second chapter of his Ecclesiastes he frankly acknowledges that he indulged himself in the pursuit of pleasure, and a desire to know what the enjoyment of mirth, wine, and festivity, even to an excessive degree, would do for him; but that after all, they proved only vanity and vexation of spirit. Another reason why Rehoboam was of so weak and unstable a character, is also very evident. We are told more than once in the same chapter, (as if to fix the circumstances indelibly on our minds) that his mother's name was Naamah, and that she was an Ammonitess. The Ammonites were one of those nations, with whom the Israelites were forbidden to have intercourse, on account of their being so immersed in Idolatry. This probably is one reason

why we so frequently find in the Sacred writings, the name of the mother, and the nation to which she belonged, as having a particular influence on the education and character of the person exhibited to view.

But let us see how different from the one just mentioned, is the testimony of the Apostle left on record in his Epistle to Timothy. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt, first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also." Thus, through the influence of a religious education, and a diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures, his mind was prepared to receive the Apostle's testimony concerning Christ. And by obedience to the manifestations of that divine light, which the Evangelist John testified, "enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," he soon became a distinguished advocate of that cause he so early and so nobly espoused.

Another instance, of more recent date, is worthy of our attention, wherein pious parental care was of singular benefit in train-

ing up a person, whose character is esteemed by people of every denomination. It also shows us the advantages of an early acquaintance with, and love for the Holy Scriptures. That eminent, and faithful servant of the Lord, John Woolman, when in the thirty-sixth year of his age, says, "Through the care of my parents, I was taught to read nearly as soon as I was capable of it. And when about seven years old, as I went from school, while my companions were at play, I went forward out of sight, and sitting down, read in Revelations. "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, &c." And in reading, my mind was drawn to seek after that pure habitation. The place where I sat, and the sweetness that attended my mind, remain fresh in my memory. The pious instructions of my parents, were often fresh in my mind, when I happened to be among wicked children, and were of use to me. My parents having a large family of children, used frequently on first-days after meeting, to put us to read in the Holy Scriptures, or some other reli-

gious book, one after another, the rest sitting quietly : which I have often thought a good practice. And an apprehension that there was less steadiness, and firmness among people in this, than in former ages, often troubled me while I was a child."

'To the excellency of the practice, here recommended, there are many who can set their seal from blessed experience, knowing that the advantages arising from an early acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures are incalculable. Of this we need no stronger additional proof, than the testimonies of those who are drawing towards the close of life. Those who have received instruction from these writings, and have endeavoured to walk according to their precepts, feel, in such solemn moments, a consolation therefrom, and often recurring to the promises therein contained, find them as an anchor to their souls, in times of close conflict. And how often do we find children, not more than seven or eight years old, who have had this care bestowed upon them, adverting to passages of Scripture, or pious hymns, which their parents have taught them, and which

in sickness have proved a support under their bodily suffering, and enabled them, though they hardly knew what prayer was, to ask patience, and submission to the Divine will.

There is another class who have borne ample testimony to the excellency of the Sacred writings, though under very different circumstances, and with very different feelings. Though they have been engaged in the pursuit of wealth, honour, fame, or some other phantom, yet when they have heard the Scriptures spoken of by those who knew their worth, they have felt the witness in their own bosoms to respond to the truth. Nevertheless, neglecting to peruse them, and to see for themselves, these, when the world, with all its promised enjoyments, was fast receding from their view, and they have seen through the medium of a wounded conscience, the mistake they have made, have declared to the world, that if they had their time to live over again, their principal study should be the Holy Scriptures. It is evident, that there must be a superior excellency in those Sacred writings, or why

should they be so uniformly adverted to in those solemn moments ?

The interest that is manifested, and the pains that are taken to educate the children of persons in low circumstances, furnish the cheering hope that many will thus be preserved from those habits of idleness and dissipation which are now so prevalent. These when they become parents themselves, will be more generally able to instruct their own children, at least, in the first rudiments of learning. Every mother who has a sufficient portion of learning, ought to teach her children to spell as soon as they are capable of it. And there are very few mothers so situated as to prevent them from performing this duty, if they are careful to occupy their time as they ought to do. To make a child fond and careful of its book, is a great point gained, and one that is, with proper management, not very difficult to accomplish. It will then listen to instruction as an indulgence and pleasure, not as a task. It is a good method, when children do not learn easily, to form the letter we wish them to remember on a piece of paper, and pin it on their sleeve.

By this means, we can repeatedly ask them its name, until they get a perfect knowledge of it. And if a child learns only one, or two letters a day, how soon will it obtain a knowledge of the whole alphabet. It has been often asserted, that some children take months at school to learn their letters. This is time lost ; yes, worse than merely lost. This difficulty of obtaining a knowledge of the alphabet, at an age when a child is sent to school, operates as a discouragement, and it is apprehended, that few such children ever acquire that fondness for books, and that love of reading, which they would do if taught before their minds became occupied with other things. Dr. Franklin observed, that he read with facility when very young, and that he did not remember being without that acquisition. To this early instruction of his parents, and a love for reading, he attributes much of his subsequent usefulness to mankind. He also adds this testimony to the care of his parents. “ By assiduous labour, and honest industry, they decently supported a numerous family, and educated with success thirteen children, and

seven grandchildren.” “He was pious and prudent, she was discreet and virtuous.”

A child that is early taught to read, has many advantages. If it is furnished with suitable books, of which there is a great variety, it will improve itself, and obtain a knowledge of many things which will be of future use. And by proper reading, the mind is more likely to be preserved from imbibing those pernicious ideas which are diffused through the medium of false and frightful stories, against which, the infant mind cannot be too carefully guarded. The object which we ought to keep in view, is the cultivation, and perfection of those powers with which we are blessed; that when the time of maturity arrives, they may be employed for the promotion of that happiness to ourselves, and that usefulness to society, for which they were given.

FALSEHOOD, AND DETRACTION.

These vices are often mentioned by Solomon, who doubtless had much knowledge of their effects on the human heart. We, too, see the baneful consequences of tale-

bearing, falsehood, and an indulgence of the malevolent passions, and that they are severely felt in families, and in neighbourhoods. "The froward man" continues "to sow strife, and whisperers to separate chief friends." "He that hath a froward heart, findeth no good, and he that hath a perverse tongue, falleth into mischief." These dispositions ought, therefore to be early and especially guarded against in children. For, if they are not suppressed in childhood, they become habitual, and are frequently retained through life, and disqualify the individual for the society of the wise and virtuous. But candour, a just representation of facts, and a proper government of the passions, should be practically encouraged by all who have the care of children ; for here, as in other branches of education, example has a powerful effect. If a child has committed a fault, and frankly acknowledges it, he should be as readily forgiven.

In 2nd Kings, 5th chapter, the advantages resulting from candour, intelligence, and an amiable disposition, are peculiarly exemplified in the character of the little captive

maid, who waited on the wife of Naaman, the Syrian Captain. "Now Naaman was a great man, with his master the king of Syria, but he was a leper." This little maid, feeling an affectionate interest in the welfare of her master, and a solicitude for the recovery of his health, said thus to her mistress. "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." She had heard, while she was in her own land, of the prophet's fame, and of the miracles he had wrought, and had treasured them up. It is also evident that she was one in whom could be placed the most perfect confidence; for although she was in the station of a servant, her mistress listened to her with attention, and there does not appear to have been the least distrust. On the intelligence being communicated to the King, Naaman was immediately equipped, and despatched to the land of Israel. The circumstances which occurred during his stay there, and how, by complying with the prophet's direction, he was healed of his leprosy, are recorded in the same chapter. There are also exhibited the sorrowful

effects of a covetous disposition, in the event which befel Gehazi, the prophet's servant, for soliciting of Naaman the treasure which his master Elisha had refused to accept, and for telling a direct falsehood to conceal it.

Although Gehazi had long been with Elisha, and had in many instances witnessed his penetration, yet, coveting Naaman's treasure, he used his master's name to obtain it. And when he had deposited it, and dismissed the Syrian's servant, he again appeared in Elisha's presence, as if nothing had occurred! and with confidence answered Elisha when he queried of him, "whence comest thou, Gehazi?" "Thy servant went no whither." But how keenly must he have felt the reproof, when Elisha replied, "Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee." For these complicated crimes, "the disease of Naaman clave to him, and he went out from the presence of Elisha, a leper as white as snow." From that time he must have been entirely excluded from the privilege of attending on the prophet, and receiving his instruction. Thus it is, "While

- the faithful man shall abound with blessings, he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent." And it is an incontrovertible maxim, that, "the way of the transgressor is hard."

MODERATION.

If we were to observe the Apostolic injunction, "Let your moderation be known to all men; the Lord is at hand;" it is probable we should, in many respects, act very differently from what we do. A full belief in the latter declaration, would have a tendency to preserve us in the foregoing precept. And if we were always to consider ourselves in the presence of Him, who hears all our words, sees all our actions, and knows the very thoughts of our hearts, and that he will reward us accordingly, we should not feel such a disposition to deviate from the true medium. We should doubtless feel a much greater interest in doing what would please him, than what would please ourselves.

If we were but careful to make our moderation manifest to all men, it would, by reliev-

ing the mind from many unnecessary cares and anxieties, afford much more leisure for the cultivation of its powers, and directing its pursuits to higher and more important objects. It would also contribute greatly to health, and the enjoyment of those blessings which pertain to this life.

Is it not for want of proper reflection and exertion, that so many are suffering themselves to be carried down the stream of folly? Were ambition, luxury, and dissipation, pursued by those only who find real pleasure in them, the number of their votaries would soon diminish. Are not many far more solicitous to appear happy, than they are to be really so? And for this appearance, do they not often lose its reality? Health, competency, and peace of mind, which contribute so much to human happiness, are often all sacrificed at the shrine of fashion. Even the pleasures of society, pleasures so congenial to the heart of man, are not properly estimated. When the board of hospitality is spread by the hand of friendship for the objects of esteem and affection, it seldom fails to produce satisfaction, complacency,

and delight. By cheerfulness and sympathy, the powers of conversation are called forth to peculiar advantage, and the heart is opened to the impressions of tenderness and benevolence. Sentiments are developed, which, obtaining approbation and currency from their real value, amuse, instruct, and ennoble the mind. This is society; and these are the social feelings, and dispositions, that all ought to cultivate. But for what, alas! are they exchanged? Is it not for routs and parties, where pride and ostentation, open their doors for the reception of the vain, the idle, and the licentious? who meet, they scarcely know for what, and spend their time in a way very inconsistent with the duties of christianity; or even with the comforts of domestic life. And this too, they are disposed to denominate happiness! But let all such reflect how little it deserves the name. By associating the idea of happiness with ostentation, unprofitable conversation, and vain amusements, they disqualify themselves for a search after it in their own bosoms, where only it is to be found. To prevent these sad consequences by a virtu-

ous education, should be the concern of every parent.

When we contemplate the innumerable blessings with which we are surrounded, and the various means by which the condition of man might be improved, and his rational enjoyments multiplied, are we not lost in wonder ; and do we not at once enquire, why is man thus inattentive and ungrateful ? Man being the only animal created erect, endowed with reason, and on whose face is seen that blush which betrays the feelings of his heart, why does he not preserve that dignity and happiness which are conferred on him by a wise and bountiful Creator ? The pious Watts observes, when treating of the improvement of the mind ; “ Nothing is more awful than the consideration of a human being, given up to *vice*. It places him far below the brute. And that the same creature, trained by *virtue* to the utmost perfection of its nature, is little lower than the Angels.”

How necessary it is, then, that our minds should be directed in their pursuits, by a consideration of the peculiar pleasures of

wisdom and truth! By a sense of our duty to God, and the delights arising from the exercise of our intellectual faculties! By the hope of usefulness to our fellow creatures, and the incalculable advantage to ourselves, both in this life, and that which is to come! "Blessed is that servant, who, when his Lord cometh, shall be found watching."

**PRESENCE OF MIND ESSENTIAL TO
OUR COMFORT AND PRESERVATION.**

Although females are not generally as much exposed to danger and perils as are the other sex, yet circumstances do frequently occur, in which prudence, fortitude, and presence of mind are essential to their comfort, and to their preservation, and in which they may exercise those virtues with peculiar advantage. That they should be taught timidity, or to consider it as an accomplishment to shrink from the appearance of danger, is a great error; and one that is calculated to do much harm. History, and our own observation, furnish us with numerous instances, where individuals, fami-

lies, and even cities and states, have been preserved from destruction, by the exertion of those amiable and important qualities in the female character.

In the conduct of Abigail, the Carmelitess, we are furnished with an interesting example of prudence, discretion, and seasonable interposition. When she was told that David, (who was then in the wilderness of Paran) had sent his servants to Nabal, her husband, desiring a favour ; and that, instead of granting their request, or treating them even with common civility, he had railed on them and sent them away empty ; she took the subject into serious consideration, and finding her husband was not in a situation to be consulted, she resolved on going immediately to David, and endeavouring to appease the anger she conceived might rankle in his breast, and prompt him to revenge. As she hasted with the present she had prepared, and was descending the covert of a hill, she was confirmed in her suspicion, for she saw David and his men advancing. When she met him, her humble submission, her affectionate address, and the elegant language

which proceeded from the integrity of her heart, so effectually wrought upon his feelings, that instead of prosecuting his intention of not leaving one of Nabal's household alive by the morning light, he became pacified, saying thus to Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel which sent thee this day to meet me : and blessed be thy advice." Accepting the present at her hand, he returned rejoicing, that he had been thus preserved from shedding blood. And Abigail went to her own home.

Another instance is recorded by the Sacred historian, which occurred after David ascended the throne. When the city of Abel was closely beseiged, and the assailants were demolishing its walls, it was, by the attention and counsel of a woman, preserved with its inhabitants from destruction. And this interposition was imputed to her for wisdom.

A circumstance has lately occurred, in which female exertion and presence of mind, were of great importance. An elegant mansion, the habitation of a hospitable pair, was, in their absence, discovered to be on

fire. The alarm being given, soon brought some of the neighbours to the assistance of the family. They, however, being alarmed, gave it as their opinion that the fire could not be extinguished, and insisted on securing the furniture by removal. A young woman who happened to be there on a visit, begged them to desist, and to turn their attention to supplying her with water. They complied with her request, and by their assistance, the flame was soon extinguished, and the building with all its contents was thus preserved. Are not such instances sufficient to convince us of the propriety of cultivating those dispositions on our own account, as well as to qualify us for the better instruction of the other sex, while under our peculiar care ; and while their minds are susceptible of lasting impressions ? There is no part of education, where example has a more powerful influence, than in these respects ; nor where impressions made in early life have a stronger and more lasting effect. Timidity even sometimes so far weakens the powers of the mind, as to destroy that cheerfulness and complacency by which the social and domestic life is sweetened.

DOMESTIC CONCERNS.

In the management of domestic concerns, order and method must be observed, and all hurry and confusion ought to be carefully avoided ; for as Lavater very justly remarks, they are *generally* “ the efforts of indolence.” But it is also evident, to an observing mind, that they are *sometimes* occasioned by the want of a proper cultivation of those powers, which enable us to comprehend, and to unite, the greater and the less calls of domestic duty, and so to arrange our business, that all may be employed without improperly interfering with each other, or retarding the progress of the different branches of domestic economy.

If we would begin at the right end of the thing, it must be with the morning of the day, and the morning of life. This is an essential point. Sleep should never be considered as a luxury, but as only a necessary refreshment to invigorate the body, and prepare it for further exertions. Therefore the propriety and advantages of early rising,

should be, by example and precept, fixed on the youthful mind.

All nature around us has a voice : does it not call to us, and say as the Angel did to one of the ancients ? “ Hear me, and I will instruct thee, hearken to the thing that I say, and I will tell thee more.” Does not the returning light admonish us in the most intelligent language ; ‘ thy body is now refreshed with sleep ; thy mind has been relieved of its cares ; let each resume its proper allotment. When thou hast returned suitable thanks for blessings received, and thy mind is under the sustaining influence of love and gratitude, prepare for the exercises of the day. Apply to them early.’

Early rising is acknowledged by the wisest of men, to contribute very much to health of body and vigour of mind. It also affords an opportunity of observing some of the most sublime and beautiful appearances of nature. What can be more beautifully sublime than the rising sun ; yet how many deprive themselves of the opportunity of beholding it, by closing their eyes against that

light which it imparts, and by which it calls on them to arise.*

In rural scenery, there are a multitude of objects to attract attention, and to enlist the purest feelings of the heart. All nature being refreshed, is, in a summer morning, lively and cheerful. The dew drops glitter on the tender herbage. The opening rose and the honey-suckle, emblems of virtuous youth, cast forth their fragrance to the morning sun. The hen comes forth with her little brood, which she has, through the night, sheltered from harm under her expanded wings. The small birds hopping from spray to spray, sing among the branches; while the robin and the lark, rising on the wing, or perch-

* My father being a man of extensive business, and my mother a woman, who, "looking well to the ways of her household," did not indulge her family "in eating the bread of idleness;" I was trained up to the habit of rising before the sun, to attend to the dairy, and other domestic concerns. And, although the evening (especially when the moon being at the full, casts forth her borrowed light to illumine the traveller's path: or the whispering breeze is lulling the labourer to rest) has its charms, and is adapted to serious reflection, yet I think there is no time so peculiarly interesting to a mind prepared to enjoy it, as a bright summer morning. Nor do I think there is any other so well calculated to impress on the youthful mind a love for the works of creation.

ed on the topmost bough, tune their voices melodiously. Oh! that man would listen attentively to the instruction they give, apply his heart unto wisdom, and join in the general song of praise and thanksgiving to Him, who rules on high, and dispenses his blessings so bountifully to the children of men. Then might "his peace be as a river, and his righteousness as the waves of the sea."

Early and suitable attention to our own concerns, affords us a much better opportunity for administering comfort and assistance to the needy and distressed, and for visiting them in the solitary abodes. If our lot in life is such that we have not bread to give for the nourishment of the body, we may have a word of consolation for the better part. We may wipe from the eye of affliction the falling tear, and direct the attention of the sufferer to those joys which never fade, a mansion "eternal in the heavens." And for those who have it also in their power to administer to the necessities of the body, to comfort the sick and afflicted, to feed the hungry, and to clothe

the naked, there is certainly no time to be *lost*. The *wealth* they possess, is “a call to duty, not discharge from care.” For the use of this they must be accountable.

As a wife, a woman is bound by the sacred bonds of marriage, to promote the welfare of her husband by every means in her power. And by so doing, she contributes greatly to her own comfort. By a mutual interchange of affectionate attention and interest, the happiness of both is increased, and they are the better qualified to fill their stations as heads of families, and as parents of children.

When a woman finds herself placed in the important station of a Mother, she is then brought under increased obligations; in the discharge of which, she will find the proper cultivation of her own mind, to be of incalculable benefit. While her sons are young, and their minds susceptible of suitable impressions, she should sow the seeds of virtue, benevolence, and all those amiable qualities that will, in manhood, render them honourable and dignified in their pursuits, respectable and useful members of the com-

munity, and virtuous and exemplary heads of families. But her daughters who must continue with her, will need a mother's care to instruct them, a mother's heart to feel for them, and a mother's hand to guide their steps, even till they arrive at womanhood themselves.

If a mother would faithfully perform her duty to her offspring, she must be willing to make many sacrifices. What sacrifices? some may say. Those of inclination. And if improper habits have been indulged, they must be corrected. The comfort and improvement of her family must be her principal object. Social visiting, and a virtuous intercourse with those we love, are some of the greatest comforts of life; yet even these must be under such restrictions that nothing may suffer by her absence. Her inclination may sometimes lead her to prefer stillness and inactivity, when those under her care need instruction; but opportunities that will tend to their benefit, and prepare them for usefulness, must not be suffered to pass by unimproved.

Many advantages arise from girls being

taught economy in their wearing apparel ; how to make and repair most articles of their dress, and to lay them away carefully when they are not needed. By such attention, some females make a more decent and respectable appearance, and with not half the expense, than others do, who are idle and negligent.

They should be also taught such different branches of housewifery, as their strength and capacity will admit. And, as the preparation of our food is an essential part of domestic economy, much care is necessary to have it done in such a way that it will contribute to health, and best answer the purpose for which it is designed : Not to pamper the palate of the epicure, but to afford nourishment to the body, that it may be supported under its various toils. A simple repast, suitably prepared and neatly arranged on the table, is not only more pleasing to the eye, but more grateful to the stomach, than rich and costly viands, prepared and set on in an ungraceful manner. The best of food may be rendered unwholesome by negligence, and it is not in the quantity, nor

in the variety of dishes that the elegance of a table consists, so much as in the neatness and order of its arrangement.

The idea of rendering themselves useful, and that neatness, order, and economy are not more essential to the comfort of the body, than they are to ease and satisfaction, should be early impressed on the minds of youth. When these ideas are fixed, and the practice of them becomes habitual, business may be pursued without anxiety. The business of the day never proceeds with more regularity, nor is accomplished with more ease, than when the mind, under serious impressions, is calm and serene. It is not necessary, at all times, to retire to the closet to wait on Him who is ever present with us. He, knowing that the body has need of these things for its existence, sometimes deigns to manifest himself to us, while our hands are engaged in our lawful occupations, and we are from experience assured that the Apostle's assertion to Timothy was correct, when he said; "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

To a woman who has been properly instructed, and who has a knowledge of her own concerns, it is a source of peculiar satisfaction to know, that what she requires of her domestics is consistent with the obligations they are under to her. And the mistress who treats them with mildness and suitable attention, is generally much better served, than she who treats them with harshness and severity. Their love and attachment create a desire to please, and these mutual interests contribute very much to the quietude and happiness of all around them. Thus, by such example, the younger branches of the family are taught to treat domestics with suitable respect.

And as much depends on the female branches of the family, with respect to domestics having the opportunity of attending places for Divine Worship, on the day set apart for religious instruction and improvement, it would tend much to facilitate this part of our duty towards them, if we were to follow the example of a pious woman of rank. A neighbour stepping into her house on business, was thus addressed :—" I hope you will

excuse my house not being quite in order this morning. Yesterday was a day of rest, and I endeavour to do with as little labour as I can on Sunday, that my family may all have the opportunity of attending their places of worship."

When we take those who are under our immediate care, to places of public worship, we should teach them to conduct with propriety on such solemn occasions. We should have the same care of them as of our own children, that they do not fall asleep, &c. For, if a child is suffered to fall asleep in such places, with impunity, it has a tendency to divest the mind of that reverential feeling we all ought, most certainly, to cherish, when convened for so solemn and important a purpose. Those who indulge this ill habit in youth, are more liable to be overtaken with it in riper years. The Apostolic injunction is as necessary for us to attend to, if we desire to be benefitted by assembling together, as it was for the Romans. "I beseech you, therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Poverty, loss of parents, and many other circumstances occur, which place children under the care of strangers. These children having the same interest with our own, in the redemption of the soul by Jesus Christ, have a peculiar claim upon our care. Their situation in life often compels them to exertion, and inures them to labour. And where proper care is taken to inform their minds, and to encourage them to improve opportunities of leisure, they may, and often do, become some of the most useful members of the community.

Some of the most interesting characters exhibited in sacred record, were husbandmen, shepherds, servants, &c. Noah and Abraham were husbandmen. Jacob was a hired servant to Laban. Joseph was sold by the Ishmaelites to Potiphar, whom he served with fidelity. Moses, when a stranger in the land of Midian, fed the flocks of Jethro. David, while watching those of his father, treasured up much useful information. And that great Apostle, Paul, though instructed by Gamaliel, was by trade a tent-maker, and followed that occupation.

Women are there also exhibited to view, engaged in their various employments. Sarah “kneaded the dough, and baked the cakes,” when Abraham entertained the angels. Rebekah was fetching a pitcher of water for family purposes, when accosted by Abraham’s servant. Rachel was going to water the flock of her father, when Jacob first cast his eyes upon her, and beheld her loveliness. Ruth was gleaning after the reapers when Boaz made the interesting inquiry, “Whose damsel is this?” And Esther, the captive Jewess, when called upon to appear in the presence of king Ahasuerus, did not ask any ornaments to deck herself with. The unassuming, gentle, and modest deportment of those females, was doubtless a much stronger recommendation to men of discernment, than all the art they could have used, or the ornaments they could have procured.

And seeing the great Parent of the Universe, has not made any distinction in the distribution of his blessings, on account of colour, let us follow his example, by not making any, in the distribution of our care. By ascertaining what we would wish to

have done for our children if they were reduced to the situation of the poor little African, we may judge what must be our conduct, in order to fulfil that command of Christ ; “ All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”

MODESTY.

Modesty is, with the strictest propriety, considered an ornament to the female sex. And why is it not an ornament to the other sex also ? Is it not approved, is it not admired by all the wise and virtuous of both sexes ? Is it not a preservation from many snares and temptations ? If we give the subject its due consideration, I believe every pious mind will discover it to be one of great importance, and one that involves many interesting particulars.

As we look forward with a desire for the improvement and welfare of mankind, let us individually cherish every disposition that will have a tendency to promote the object of that desire, and not rest satisfied with the wish, without the exertion. By chasing im-

proper thoughts from our minds, as soon as they present themselves, we gain additional strength ; and by so doing, we shall be preserved from immodest words and actions, which are generally first conceived in thought.

This interesting and amiable virtue should be fostered in the bosom of every mother, and from thence transplanted, and carefully nurtured in those of her offspring from their very infancy. By this means, it would become so rooted, that whatever the situation of the individual might be, in after life, or however great his exposure, it would rarely, if ever, be entirely eradicated.

Much may be done by a modest woman, in forming the minds of her children and those around her. And what person who is not blinded by custom, or depraved by habitual indulgence, can behold, without approbation, the becoming deportment of those, who are circumscribed in all their conduct by strict propriety and modesty ? Or who can approach a modest person with that confidence with which he would address one who manifests but little regard for

modesty ? Those who have assurance enough to make the attempt, generally retire with mortification.

If females would but maintain their proper dignity, and not give any just grounds for the unfavourable remarks, which are frequently made in their absence ; if they would discountenance that familiarity which gives confidence to the other sex, and often induces them to behave in a way which they themselves know to be inconsistent, it would contribute very much to the improvement of society, and relieve from many unnecessary anxieties.

It is not that servile fear, which cannot be spoken to without a blush, that I wish to cultivate, but that suavity of manners, and that propriety of behaviour, which manifest a mind above those absurdities, which, for want of proper attention, so often make their appearance in mixed companies. It is with modesty, as with the other amiable dispositions of the heart, it manifests itself much more forcibly by our conduct, than by our assertions.

True and genuine politeness is very near-

ly allied to modesty. It is the offspring of virtue and benevolence, nurtured by that tenderness of heart which is ever cautious of irritating or wounding the feelings of a fellow creature, in any circumstance in life. Hence it is, that the really polite man or woman is so at home, as well as abroad ; in private, as well as in company. And from this source is derived no small portion of domestic happiness.

MARRIAGE.

This is a subject intimately connected with a proper cultivation of the female mind, and one in which a mother's care is of the utmost importance. Marriage, though a civil act, requires a union of spirit to make it happy. To ascertain that this union subsists between the parties, needs time and deliberation. And who can be a more suitable person to consult, particularly for a female, than a mother. Her knowledge, observation, and experience, give her an opportunity of becoming intimately acquainted with the subject. A little girl, not five years old, on hearing that a neighbour had

treated his wife very improperly, asked her mother many questions relative to marriage : to which the mother returned answers, according to her ideas of the importance and the sacredness of its obligations. The child, after remaining some time silent, observed ; “ If that is the case, and people must remain together as long as they live, it is certainly necessary they should become well acquainted with each other, before they do marry.” An observation which would do credit to one of more age and experience, and which, if properly attended to, would prevent much sorrow and bitterness of soul.

The female, according to present usage, has not the opportunity of making proposals of marriage ; but she has the inestimable privilege of declining the offer, when it is not consistent with her views. It is a subject therefore which ought to be treated by parents, as one of great importance, and which never should be spoken of in the presence of children or young people, with lightness and disrespect.

If that freedom which is the result of mutual love, and mutual interest, was care-

fully maintained between parents and children, there are many, very many of our young people, who might be preserved from that gulf into which they plunge themselves in an unguarded moment. How often do we see parents deploring the rash steps of their children ; and sometimes, even carrying their resentment so far as to deny them admittance into their presence. It is very probable, if such parents were seriously to examine, they would find that the conduct of their children might be traced to a want of parental care in early life. By timely care and proper instruction, many miseries which we entail on ourselves, and on posterity, and of which we so heavily complain, might be, and would be avoided.

It is a weakness, too prevalent amongst us, to be pleased with a prospect of wealth and grandeur, in the formation of the marriage contract ; not enough considering, that with the union of spirit, before mentioned, and a comfortable subsistence, there is more, much more, real domestic happiness, than the world, with all its pomp and glitter, can afford without it. It is, therefore, very neces-

sary, that the influence which parents have over their children and those under their care, should be properly employed. For how often do we see that those, who "lean on earth," find indeed

—" 'Twill pierce them to the heart.

A broken reed at best, and oft a spear,

On whose sharp point, peace bleeds, and hope expires."

CONCLUSION.

It was said by the pious Howe, a man of much reflection and observation, and a sincere friend to the cause of christianity, that, "It is the duty of every person coming into the world, to leave it as much better than he finds it, as he can." Were this maxim observed, and our minds imbued with that love, which breathes "Glory to God in the highest, on earth, peace, good will towards men." With what pleasing anticipation might we contemplate the near approach of that day, when, "Swords shall be beaten into plough-shares, and spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

I am aware that but few of the subjects intimately connected with female education, and home instruction, can be brought within the limits of this little work. Yet, as a proof how much may be done in this important business by individual care, industry, and perseverance, I take pleasure in introducing a few extracts from the journal of a very interesting tour in Iceland, performed by E. Henderson in 1814, & 15. In his visit to that inhospitable clime, embracing most parts of the island, he had great opportunity of becoming acquainted with the habits, manners, situation, and wants of its inhabitants.

He says that, "Though there is but one school in Iceland, and that solitary one is exclusively designed for the education of such as are afterwards to fill offices in church or state, yet it is exceedingly rare, to meet with a boy or girl, who has attained to the age of nine or ten years, that cannot read and write with ease. And there is not a peasant, or scarcely a servant girl, in Iceland, who is not capable of reading the most ancient documents extant on the Island, though it has been inhabited near nine hundred years.

“There being no parish schools, nor indeed any private establishments, for the instruction of youth, their mental culture depends entirely on the disposition and abilities of their parents. In general, however, neither of these are wanting. The parish of Hoff contains more than four hundred souls, yet there is only one parishoner, upwards of eight years of age, that cannot read. And this individual is prevented by a natural infirmity.

“Their method of education has a very favourable effect upon them, in many respects. It is considered the duty and interest of the mother, to form the minds of her children, and to instruct them in the first rudiments of learning, as soon as they are capable of receiving it. The father then teaches such other branches as appear desirable. Thus, without the expense, exposure, or loss of time, which most experience, they acquire a perfect understanding of things necessary and expedient. And in many instances those who have never been at school, are capable of reading authors of several different languages.

“The predominant character of the Icelanders is that of unsuspecting frankness, pious contentment, and a steady liveliness of temperament, combined with strength of intellect, and acuteness of mind. They are kind and hospitable; and in their general knowledge, superior to people of their rank, in most other parts of the world.

“As I was riding along one day, I was entertained by the interesting conversation of a peasant, who was going to a market town with his produce. The knowledge he discovered of the geography, politics, &c. of Britain, quite astonished me. He gave me a long detail of circumstances, and proposed many questions. Among other things, as a proof that he had not read the scriptures without reflection, I may mention his being somewhat at a loss to account for the term ‘wrath’ being ascribed to God, in the Bible. And it was not until I had explained to him the difference between holy and reasonable anger, and that which is unreasonable and malicious, and shown him that those expressions, as applied to the Divine Being, signified his disapprobation of every species

of iniquity, and was ultimately resolved into his love of righteousness, that he declared himself satisfied on the subject.

“On enquiring of my hostess, how many children she had, her reply was, I have four. Two of them are here with us, and the other two are with God. It is best with those that are with him ; and my chief concern about the two that remain, is, that they may reach Heaven in safety.

“A winter evening in an Icelandic family, presents a scene, in the highest degree interesting and agreeable. Between three and four o'clock, the lamp is hung up in the principal apartment, and all the members of the family take their stations, with their work in their hands, on their respective seats, all of which face each other. The master and mistress, together with the children, or other relatives, occupy those at the inner end of the room ; the rest are filled by the servants. The work is no sooner begun, than one of the family, selected for the purpose, advances to a seat near the lamp, and commences the evening lecture, which generally consists of some historical composition

of the Icelanders, or such other histories as are to be had on the Island. Being poorly supplied with printed books, the Icelanders are under the necessity of copying such as they can get the loan of, which sufficiently accounts for the fact, that most of them write a hand equal in beauty to that of the ablest writing masters in other parts of Europe. Some specimens of their Gothic writing is scarcely inferior to copperplate. The reader is frequently interrupted, either by the head, or some of the more intelligent parts of the family, who make remarks on various parts of the story, and propose questions, with a view to exercise the children and domestics. In some houses, those histories are repeated by such as have got them by heart. The evening labour frequently continues until midnight, when they read a chapter in some devotional book; (the bible, if they have it, is preferred,) and conclude the evening with devotional exercise in some way or other.

“One family, however, I met with in ~~my~~ tour, whose character was quite a contrast with any I had hitherto observed in Iceland. About four months before I visited them, as

I was afterwards informed, their conduct had become so intolerable, that it was found necessary to summon them before a court ; when it appeared that the wickedness of the children had not only prompted them to compose satirical songs on the priest, and people of the parish, but to assist others in composing similar ones on their own parents. They were sentenced to be beaten with rods at home by the constable, and to do public penance, as a warning to the congregation. Nor were the parents suffered to pass with impunity, but were fined. . The bad conduct of the children was, in a great measure, ascribed to a neglect in education, and the influence of evil example in their parents."

On leaving the Island, he makes the following interesting remarks. " Having taken leave of my friends, from whom I had experienced the kindest and most unwearied attention, (not being quite ready when the last vessel for the season sailed for Liverpool) I embarked on the 20th of August, in one bound for Copenhagen. As we stood out from Reykiavik, and the land began to recede from my view, I was conscious of

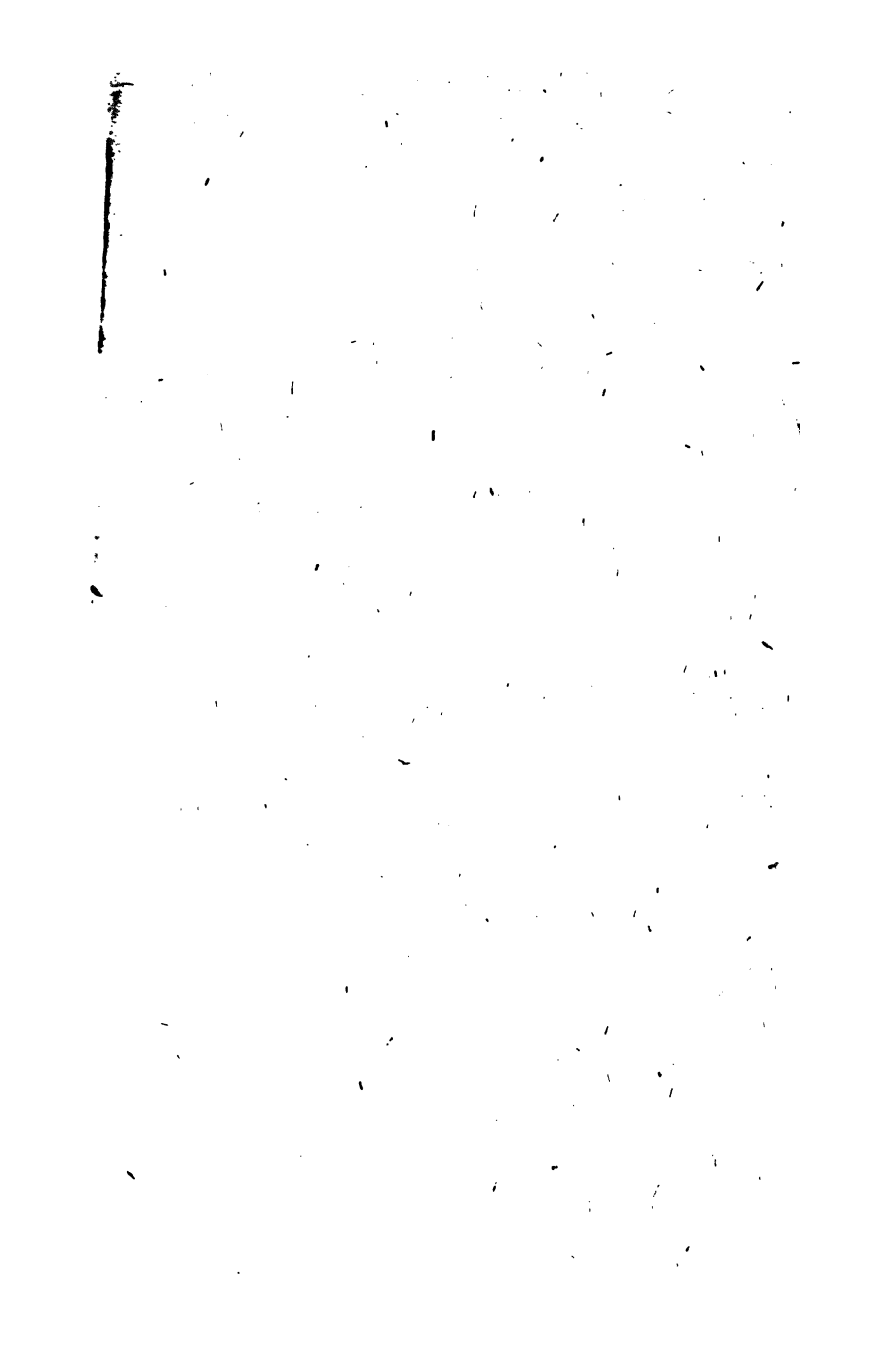
strong feelings of regret, which not even the anticipations necessarily connected with my return to the continent of Europe, were able fully to repress. I was leaving an Island distinguished by its natural phenomena, from every other spot on the surface of the globe, where I had been furnished with frequent opportunities of contemplating and admiring some of the most sublime displays of the wisdom and power of God in the operations of nature. But what principally attached me to Iceland, was the exhibition of moral worth, and the strong features of superior intellectual abilities which had often attracted my notice during the period of my intercourse with its inhabitants. My thoughts were also directed to the effects which were likely to result from my visit. I had circulated extensively among them, that excellent book, which is able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ; which contains an authenticated, complete, and most satisfactory account of the character, purposes, and will of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and direct the guilty sons of Adam to the only possible way in which

they can obtain true and lasting felicity. And while I reflected on the responsibility which attaches to the situation of such as are favoured with this account, and the guilt and condemnation of those who receive not the truth in the love of it, that they may be saved ; my earnest prayer for the Icelanders was, that they might have grace communicated to them from above, to enable them suitably to improve the inestimable privilege which had been conferred upon them."

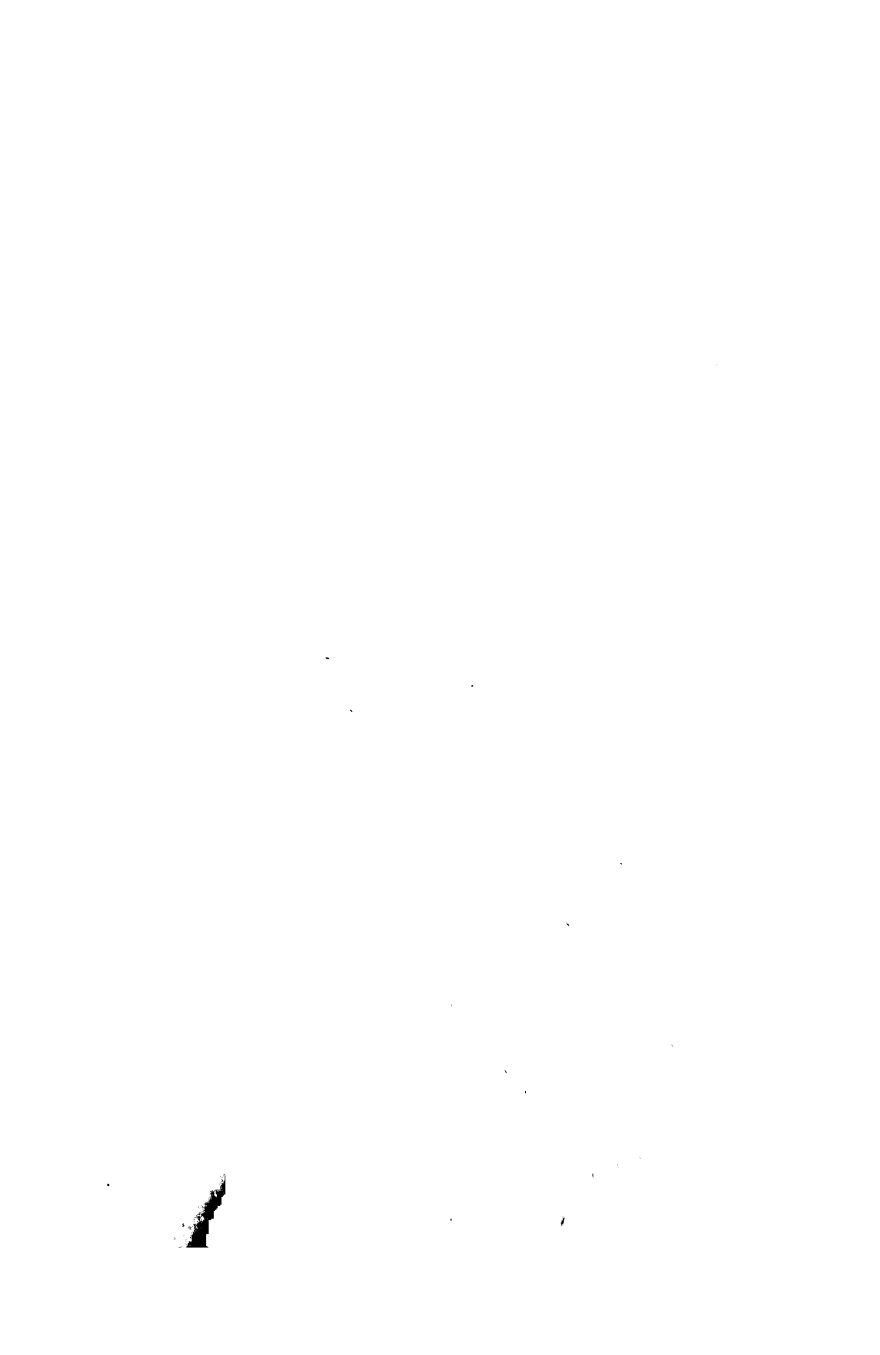
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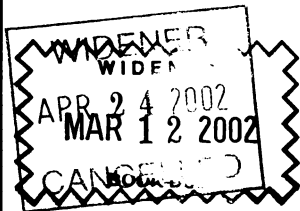


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